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COLCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION
Regular Meeting

Tuesday, June 10, 2025
6:00 PM
William J. Johnston Middle School BlackBox Theatre

MINUTES - REVISED

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT : Chair Donna Antonacci, Secretary Margo Gignac, Alexander Oliphant, Michelle Millington and Rosemary Gignac.

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT : Superintendent Daniel P. Sullivan, III, Director of Pupil Services Eve Hurley, Assistant Director of Pupil Services Rebecca Tedesco, Bacon Academy (BA) Principal Amy Begué, BA Interim Assistant Principal Matthew Parsons, William J Johnston Middle School (WJJMS) Principal Christopher Bennett, Jack Jackter Intermediate School (JJIS) Interim Principal Melissa Cyr, Colchester Elementary School (CES) Principal Judy O'Meara.

OTHERS PRESENT : Director of Finance and Operations Rachel Linkkila, Instructional Technology Coordinator Barbara Johnson, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent Alyssa Fratoni, Director of Educational Operations Andrew Barillari, Student Board Member Brooke Dean.

1. **MEETING OPENING**
   1.1. Call to Order
   D.Antonacci called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM

   1.2 Roll Call
   D.Antonacci, M.Gignac, M.Millington and R.Gignac present at time of roll call.

   1.3 Pledge of Allegiance

2. ***ADDITIONS / CHANGES TO THE AGENDA**
   2.1. *Proposed New Agenda Item(s)
   Motion by: M.Gignac
   Motion to go into Executive Session after agenda item 13.3 to discuss a personnel matter.
   Second: R.Gignac
   Roll Call: All in favor
   Vote: Motion carried

3. **RECOGNITIONS / ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**
   3.1. Strike Out Cancer Fundraiser Recognition
   Matthew Parsons spoke about the Rally Against Cancer event that was held in March in

support of the Dana Farber Foundation and the Jimmy Fund. Over the past four years, Colchester has raised just under $50,000 for the cause. He expressed his gratitude to Superintendent Sullivan for supporting the event in Colchester. Parsons also shared that seven members of the Colchester community will be participating at Fenway Park on September 20, 2025.

3.2. Invention Convention Students at JJIS and WJJMS

Interim Principal Cyr and Principal Bennett celebrated student success for JJIS and WJ Invention Convention students. Julian from JJIS and Charlotte and Ellie from WJ competed and won awards at Invention Convention State Finals held at UCONN.

A.Oliphant arrived at 6:14 PM

3.3. BA Class of 2025 Valedictorian

Ethan LoVetere is the BA Class of 2025 Valedictorian. Congratulations Ethan!

3.4. Recognition of BA Class of 2025 Student Board Member

The Board recognizes and thanks Brooke Dean for her service to the Board over the last three years of her high school career.

3.5. Recognition of Retiring CPS Faculty and Staff

Recognition for in person attendees of Retiring Staff include:

JJIS - Linda Lane
WJ - Chris Bennett, Cindy Noniewicz, Margaret Lewis, and Jennifer DelSesto
BA - Sam Norman

Representatives from the Board and Administration will go around to the schools later this week with retirement gifts for all retirees.

4. STUDENT BOARD MEMBER REPORT

4.1. Report from Student Board Members

Student Board Member Brooke Dean reported that graduation will take place this Thursday. The annual Senior Walk was held last week. Project Grad is scheduled for Thursday evening and will offer a fun and secure way for seniors to celebrate. The Senior Social also took place recently. The free bus service provided after exams has been utilized and is well liked by students. Eighth grade promotion, along with the dance and picnic, will occur later this week.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

5.1. For Public Comments, please see Policy 1120 *Public Comment and Correspondence at Board Meetings*

None in person or online.

6. REPORT FROM SCHOOL LIAISONS

6.1. CES

Nothing to report.

6.2. JJIS

Nothing to report.

6.3. WJ

Nothing to report.

6.4. BA

The ECC Championships for baseball and softball were recently held. Awards nights for underclassmen took place to recognize student achievements. A parent forum was also held to provide updates on end of year events.

7. *CONSENT AGENDA

7.1. *Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes of May 13, 2025
Motion by: M.Gignac
Motion to approve Consent Agenda Items 7.1 - 7.6
Second: R.Gignac
Roll Call: All in favor
Vote: Motion carried

7.2. *Approval of Retreat Meeting Minutes of May 13, 2025
See Agenda Item 7.1

7.3. *Approval of BA First Day Fundraising
See Agenda Item 7.1

7.4. *Approval of BA Agro-Science Donation
See Agenda Item 7.1

7.5. *Approval of BA Track & Field Fundraising
See Agenda Item 7.1

7.6. *Approval of BA Science and Music Disposal Request
See Agenda Item 7.1

8. REPORT FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

8.1. CES Facilities Issue

Superintendent Sullivan expressed appreciation for the many individuals whose efforts contributed to bringing students back into the school. Additionally, a letter from Congressman Joe Courtney was read aloud by the Board Chair.

8.2. Food Services Update

The district is exploring the possibility of contracting with a food services management company and is preparing to go out to bid. Authorization has been given to collect proposals and proceed with the process. Meetings have been held with union staff to ensure their concerns are addressed. While no final decision has been made, information is still being gathered. Paperwork for the RFP has been submitted to the state, and the necessary documents have been received. The goal is to have everything submitted to the state by next week.

8.3. Sound Fields Update

Several meetings were held with a consultant who is partnering with the district on this project. The goal was to ensure the selection of the right product that aligns with the needs and spaces within our schools. The chosen device supports all students and includes a pass-around microphone, with features that meet the needs of students with hearing disabilities. The Board extended thanks to A.Barillari for his close collaboration on the project. The initiative is not locally funded, but supported through a state grant. A.Barillari's team is handling the wiring and installation, allowing all available funds to be directed toward purchasing hardware. Only about five to six spaces—such as cafeterias—will go without fixed systems, and the district is exploring portable systems for use in larger or outdoor spaces.

8.4. New Website Update

The new CPS website was officially launched last Wednesday. Lynette Dimock and Barbara Johnson have led the migration from the old site to the new one, with a focus on improving accessibility for screen readers and overall usability. A public usability study was conducted, with participation from close to 60 individuals. Feedback continues to be welcomed as the district works to refine and improve the site.

8.5. Board Docs Update

The district is currently storing agendas, meeting minutes, and the policy manual on the BoardDocs website. However, BoardDocs does not meet the same accessibility standards as the new website being developed. As a result, there is a need to consider the future location of the policy manual to ensure it is accessible to all users.

8.6. PowerSchool Breach Update

The district was notified of a data breach within PowerSchool in the winter. Concerns were raised regarding poor and misleading communication, as well as the lack of basic data safeguards on PowerSchool's part. A meeting was held regarding a mass action lawsuit, and the district has signed on to the action. PowerSchool houses sensitive student information, including grades, health records, and other protected data.

9. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

9.1. Budget Finance Committee

The meeting originally scheduled for last week was postponed to June 17, 2025 at 4:00 PM. This will be on the agenda for the Special Meeting on June 18, 2025 at 5:00 PM.

9.2. Curriculum Committee

Nothing to report.

9.3. Facilities Committee

Nothing to report.

9.4. Policy Committee

Discussion around first and second read policy changes.

10. POLICY - FIRST READ

10.1. 4112.8 *Nepotism*

Policy 4112.8 *Nepotism* will be going to the Full Board for Second Read at the June 18, 2025 Board of Education Special Meeting.

10.2. 4118.112 *Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harrassment in the Workplace (Personnel)*

Policy 4118.112 *Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harrassment in the Workplace (Personnel)* will be going to the Full Board for Second Read at the June 18, 2025 Board of Education Special Meeting.

10.3. 4118.5 *Policy Regarding Employee Use of the District's Computer Systems and Electronic Communications*

Policy 4118.5 *Policy Regarding Employee Use of the District's Computer Systems and Electronic Communications* will be going to the Full Board for Second Read at the June 18, 2025 Board of Education Special Meeting.

11. POLICY - SECOND READ

11.1. 4116.34 *Reports of Suspected Abuse or Neglect of Adults with an Intellectual Disability or Autism Spectrum Disorder*
Motion by: M.Gignac
Motion to accept changes to Policies in agenda items 11.1 - 11.3
Second: R.Gignac
Roll Call: All in favor
Vote: Motion carried

11.2. 4252.6 *Family Medical Leave Act Policy*
See Agenda Item 11.1

11.3. 5131.911 *Bullying Prevention and Intervention*
See Agenda Item 11.1

12. *PRIORITY DISCUSSION / ACTION ITEMS

12.1. *NEASC District Accreditation

Fran Kennedy delivered a presentation on the topic of District Accreditation through the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC). The presentation outlined NEASC's long-standing role as a regional accreditor and introduced the Commission on Public Schools, which oversees accreditation for elementary through high schools.

The discussion included an overview of the updated 2023 Standards for Accreditation, which emphasize five key areas: Learning Culture, Student Learning, Professional Practices, Learning Support, and Learning Resources. These standards promote accountability, continuous growth, and strategic planning across schools and districts.

The presentation described the ten-year accreditation cycle, beginning with a candidacy application and including both a Collaborative Conference Visit and a Decennial Accreditation Visit. It was emphasized that the process is customizable, aligned with district goals, and includes built-in support from NEASC staff. Financial aspects of district accreditation were also discussed, noting that the revised group-pricing model offers cost savings compared to previous school-by-school dues.

12.2. *Award BA HVAC Bid

Superintendent Sullivan, A.Barillari and a representative from HFLenz discussed the project, went over funding issues, timelines, and the two bid options.

Motion by: M.Gignac
Award the bid to Air Temp and to award for base bid only with the understanding that the Board will make a decision about alternatives at the June 18, 2025 Board Meeting.
Second: M.Millington
Roll Call: All in favor
Vote: Motion carried

12.3. *Discussion and Possible Action on Pay to Play and Pay to Park Fees for the 2025-2026 School Year

Motion by: M.Millington
Motion to reduce Pay to Play at WJ and BA by 25% and reduce Pay to Park at BA to $80
Second: A.Oliphant
Roll Call: All in favor
Vote: Motion carried

12.4. Discussion on Board of Education Member Cell Phones

Discussion around a personal cell phone and a district issued cell phone. M.Gignac is for a district issued cell phone. M.Millington is not thrilled about the idea but would do it if necessary. Discussion will resume at the Special Meeting on June 18, 2025.

13. BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS / INFORMATION ITEMS

13.1. Personnel Report

The Personnel Report showed Resignations and Retirements since April 5, 2025.

13.2. Items of Correspondence

Items include correspondence from E.Gravell, M.Dubreuil, Congressman J.Courtney and C.Praisner.

13.3. Next Meeting

There is a Special Board of Education Meeting scheduled for Wednesday, June 18, 2025 at 5:00 PM located at William J. Johnston Middle School.

The next scheduled Regular Meeting is August 19, 2025 at 6:00 PM located at William J. Johnston Middle School.

14. EXECUTIVE SESSION

14.1. Executive Session to discuss a Personnel Matter

Motion by: M.Gignac

Motion to move into Executive Session and invite Superintendent Sullivan to discuss a personnel matter.

Second: M.Millington

Roll Call: All in favor

Vote: Motion carried

The Board moved into Executive Session at 8:12 PM
The Board returned from Executive Session at 9:17 PM

During Executive Session, the Board and Superintendent Sullivan discussed a personnel matter re: certified staff at Jack Jackter Intermediate School.

15. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by: M.Gignac

Motion to adjourn.

Second: A.Oliphant

Roll Call: All in favor

Vote: Motion carried

D.Antonacci adjourned the meeting at 9:17 PM

Respectfully submitted,

AFratoni

Alyssa Fratoni
Executive Assistant to the Superintendent